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3 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
4 **DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

5 * * *

6 LARRY BARBER,

7 Plaintiff,

8 v.

9 KILIAN LEE, et al.,

10 Defendants.
11

Case No. 2:17-cv-03135-GMN-CWH

ORDER

12 Presently before the court is plaintiff Larry Barber's motion to extend time to respond
13 (ECF No. 23), filed on April 17, 2019. Defendants did not file a response.

14 Also before the court is plaintiff's ex parte motion for appointment of counsel (ECF No.
15 24), filed on April 17, 2019.

16 Also before the court is plaintiff's motion to extend the scheduling order (ECF No. 26),
17 filed on May 10, 2019. Defendants James Dzurenda and Brian Williams filed a notice of non-
18 opposition (ECF No. 27) on May 24, 2019.

19 **I. BACKGROUND**

20 This is a pro se prisoner civil rights case alleging excessive force and retaliation. (Second
21 Am. Compl. (ECF No. 8); Order (ECF No. 9).) Plaintiff alleges that defendant Killian Lee, a
22 correctional officer, attempted to break his wrist while placing him in handcuffs during a search
23 of plaintiff's cell. Plaintiff further alleges that after the incident with Officer Lee, he wrote letters
24 to defendants Brian Williams, High Desert State Prison Warden, and James Dzurenda, the
25 Nevada Department of Corrections director, filing grievances against Lee. Plaintiff further
26 alleges that following the grievances, his points were increased and that he was then transferred to
27 a maximum-security prison.

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1 **II. MOTION TO EXTEND TIME TO RESPOND**

2 Plaintiff moves for a 30-day continuance to comply with Local Rule 7.1-1, which governs
3 the requirements for the certificate of interested parties.¹ (Mot. to Extend (ECF No. 23).) Under
4 Local Rule 7-2(d), the “failure of an opposing party to file points and authorities in response to
5 any motion, except a motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 56 or a motion for attorney’s fees, constitutes a
6 consent to granting of the motion.” Here, defendants did not file a response. The court therefore
7 grants plaintiff’s motion.

8 **III. MOTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL**

9 Plaintiff also moves for the ex parte appointment of legal counsel to assist him in this
10 case. As a preliminary matter, the court finds no reason why this motion should be sealed on the
11 docket. Therefore, the court orders the clerk of court to unseal plaintiff’s motion.

12 Civil litigants do not have a Sixth Amendment right to appointed counsel. *Storseth v.*
13 *Spellman*, 654 F.2d 1349, 1353 (9th Cir. 1981). In very limited circumstances, federal courts are
14 empowered to request an attorney to represent an indigent civil litigant. For example, courts have
15 discretion, under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1), to “request” that an attorney represent indigent civil
16 litigants upon a showing of “exceptional circumstances.” *Agyeman v. Corrections Corp. of Am.*,

18 ¹ Local Rule 7.1-1 states that

19 (a) Unless the court orders otherwise, in all cases except habeas corpus cases, pro se parties and
20 attorneys for private non-governmental parties must identify in the disclosure statement all
21 persons, associations of persons, firms, partnerships or corporations (including parent
 corporations) that have a direct, pecuniary interest in the outcome of the case.

22 The disclosure statement must include the following certification:

23 The undersigned, pro se party or attorney of record for _____, certifies that the following
24 may have a direct, pecuniary interest in the outcome of this case: (here list the names of all such
 parties and identify their connection and interests.) These representations are made to enable
 judges of the court to evaluate possible disqualifications or recusal.

25 Signature, Pro Se Party or Attorney of Record for _____.

26 (b) If there are no known interested parties other than those participating in the case, a statement to
 that effect will satisfy this rule.

27 (c) A party must file its disclosure statement with its first appearance, pleading, petition, motion,
28 response, or other request addressed to the court. A party must promptly file a supplemental
 certification upon any change in the information that this rule requires.

1 390 F.3d 1101, 1103 (9th Cir. 2004). The circumstances in which a court will make such a
2 request, however, are exceedingly rare and require a finding of extraordinary circumstances.
3 *United States v. 30.64 Acres of Land*, 795 F.2d 796, 799-800 (9th Cir. 1986); *Wilborn v.*
4 *Escalderon*, 789 F.2d 1328, 1331 (9th Cir. 1986).

5 To determine whether the “exceptional circumstances” necessary for appointment of
6 counsel are present, the court evaluates (1) the likelihood of plaintiff’s success on the merits and
7 (2) the plaintiff’s ability to articulate his claim pro se “in light of the complexity of the legal
8 issues involved.” *Agyeman*, 390 F.3d at 1103 (quoting *Wilborn*, 789 F.2d at 1331). Neither of
9 these factors is dispositive and both must be viewed together. *Wilborn*, 789 F.2d at 1331. It is
10 within the court’s discretion whether to request that an attorney represent an indigent civil litigant
11 under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1). *Palmer v. Valdez*, 560 F.3d 965, 970 (9th Cir. 2009).

12 Here, Barber does not demonstrate the exceptional circumstances required for the
13 appointment of an attorney. Given the case’s early procedural posture, the court is unable to
14 evaluate Barber’s likelihood of success on the merits. But Barber has thus far demonstrated an
15 ability to articulate his claims without an attorney, and the legal issues in this case are not
16 complex. Any pro se litigant “would be better served with the assistance of counsel.” *Rand v.*
17 *Rowland*, 113 F.3d 1520, 1525 (9th Cir. 1997) (citing *Wilborn*, 789 F.2d at 1331). Nonetheless,
18 so long as a pro se litigant can “articulate his claims against the relative complexity of the
19 matter,” the “exceptional circumstances” which might require the appointment of counsel do not
20 exist. *Id.* The court in its discretion therefore will deny Barber’s motion.

21 **IV. MOTION TO EXTEND**

22 Plaintiff also moves to extend discovery deadlines for 90 days. (Mot. to Extend (ECF No.
23 26).) Defendants respond with a notice of non-opposition and a proposed schedule for the
24 completion of discovery. (ECF No. 27.) Plaintiff did not file a reply objecting to the proposed
25 schedule. As such, the court grants plaintiff’s motion and adopts defendants’ proposed schedule.

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